

The Story of

**CHRIST EPISCOPAL
CHURCH of BAYFIELD,
WISCONSIN.**



1870—1949

This brochure is presented as a complimentary acknowledgement of the Reverend M. G. Argeaux's untiring efforts to restore Christ Church to its former position of service and influence in this community. He is truly a man of God and has before him a brilliant future.

WRITTEN BY ANNE KNIGHT

DRAWING BY STANLEY KAYE

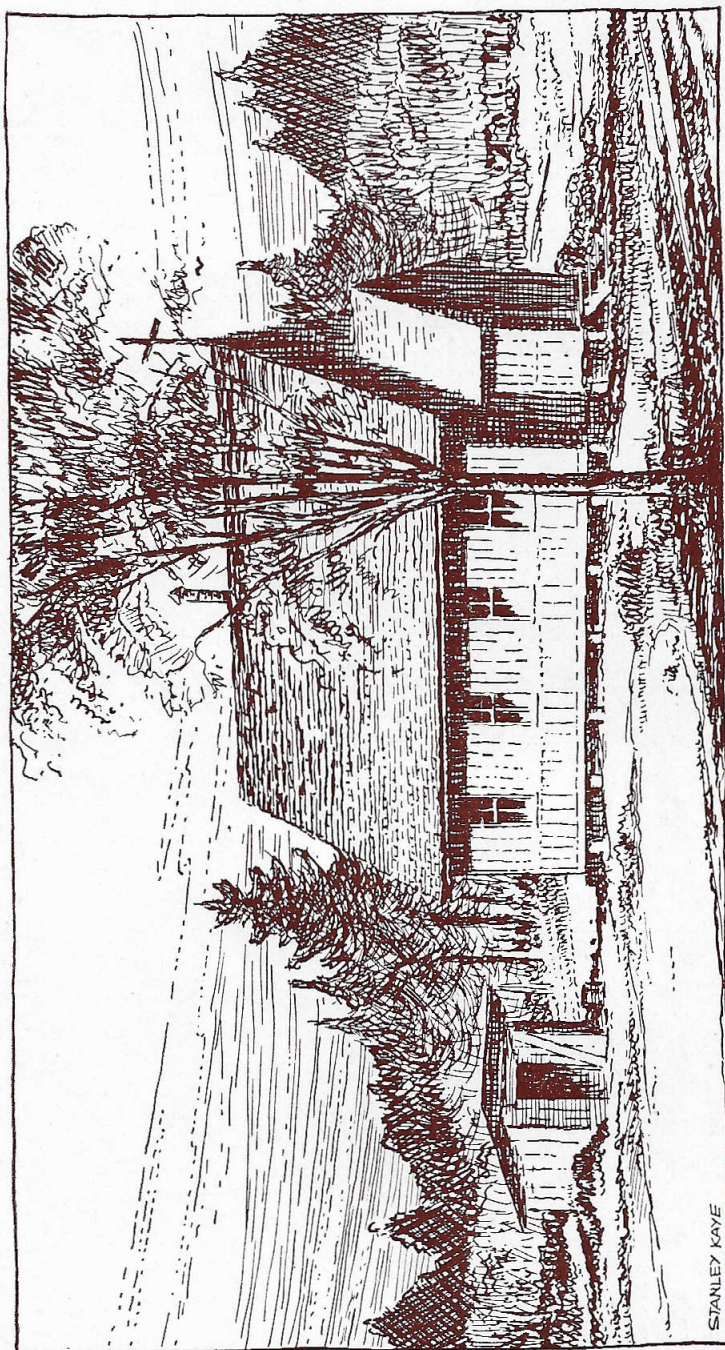
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Northern Wisconsin's First Episcopal Church



*Christ Church has served Bayfield for 79
years. A site for it was provided in
1857, then came the Civil War.*

*Its society was organized
and became active
in 1870.*



CHRIST CHURCH IN 1871 — SKETCH BY STANLEY KAYE

AT the time Henry L. Rice planned to build a city, Bayfield, on the greatest fresh water harbor in the world, little did he realize an adjustment of freight tariff, favorable only to Chicago on Lake Michigan and Duluth on Lake Superior, would defeat his dream.

Many God fearing people visioned a harbor city as Senator Rice did and came to this new land of opportunity. Some arrived in time to assist in clearing away the trees and building the first log houses. This start was made in 1856. Among the new arrivals were members of the Episcopal Church.

On April 1, 1857, Mr. C. E. Rittenhouse, of Georgetown, D. C., donated the land on which this Christ Episcopal Church now stands. Before a church building could be erected, the Civil War interfered and it was not until April 8, 1870, that the first Episcopal Church in Northern Wisconsin, Christ Church Mission of Bayfield, was organized. The first officers chosen were Theodore Carrington, Warden; Wm. H. Mower, Treasurer and J. D. Cruttenden, Secretary. The first Episcopal Church in Wisconsin was Christ Church, Green Bay, established in 1826.

Lay readings were commenced in Bayfield in October of 1869. They were conducted by Mr. Theodore Carrington in the various homes of communicants who numbered only six at that time. The Mite Society was then organized by women of Bayfield for the purpose of assisting the Mission.

FINANCIAL HELP FROM EASTERN CITIES

ALTHOUGH the Mission was organized in April of the year 1870, it was not until September of 1870 that a chapel was completed at a cost of about \$1,500.00. Donation of \$1,208.70 came principally from the eastern cities of Boston, New York, Washington, Georgetown, and Cleveland. The largest donation was \$250.00 from Jay Cooke of Philadelphia, who was a banker and

financial agent of our government. He performed a great service to the nation negotiating loans to finance the Civil War. The Mite Society donated \$59.70 towards the church.

The chapel was a very plain construction of white pine lumber cut from the local forests. Heat was furnished by a wood stove placed in the center of the building. A door on the left side of the rear wall and steps from the door to the ground, led to a woodshed. The steps and woodshed have been removed but the door still remains although never used. The church was supported by cedar posts which served as the foundation. The original hand hewn benches are still being used in the church.

The Reverend William E. Armitage, Bishop of the Wisconsin Diocese, visited this little church in August of 1871.

The following year, J. D. Cruttenden was made Treasurer, and John McCloud, Secretary of the Mission.

In 1875, the Rev. Mr. J. A. Davenport, a missionary, held services in Ashland and Bayfield for three months. On July 4, 1875, Bishop Welles of the Wisconsin Diocese visited Christ Church. John McCloud was appointed Warden, and John Knight, Secretary.

In 1876, the Rev. Mr. Mack officiated in Christ Church at various times.

Interest in this church still extended to the eastern states and on May 15, 1877, the church received a gift of a silver communion set from the New Brighton Church, Staten Island, which had been a gift to that church by the Reverend S. D. Johnson, in memory of Mrs. H. E. Mower, formerly of Bayfield.

CANON ST. GEORGE FIRST RESIDENT PRIEST

ON June 3, 1877, Rev. E. W. Spalding, Dean of the Milwaukee Cathedral, held morning and evening services in Bayfield.

Plans for the Bayfield Mission continued and the Mite Society held many bazaars and

other affairs for the benefit of the church.

Bishop Browne of the Fond du Lac Diocese first visited the Bayfield Mission in October of 1879. During this year, the Rev. Mr. Davenport occasionally conducted services.

Coming directly from England, The Reverend H. B. St. George, first resident priest, took charge of Christ Church in 1883. In a letter written on December 7, 1929, Mr. St. George referred to his arrival in Ashland on November 8, 1883, from England, on his way to Bayfield. He also referred to his Bayfield residence and his weekly trips across Lake Superior in the "Waubun" to Ashland where he conducted services in a room over a store. Canon St. George began his ministry in Bayfield and became one of the greatest liturgical scholars the American Church has known. His influence was reflected in the revision of Book of Common Prayer in 1928, when he served on the Commission for Revision.

During 1883, the belfry was built and a bell was donated by the Mite Society. The inscription on the bell is "Christ Church, Bayfield, Wis., 1883. My tongue shall speak of thy Prayer." A carpet was also donated by the Society. Members of the society sewed strips together and laid the carpet themselves.

The Rt. Rev. Bishop Grafton of Fond du Lac first visited Christ Church on August 18, 1889. From November, 1891, to April 1892, the Rev. O. C. Parry was missionary priest in charge of the church. On April 21, 1893, the Rev. A. E. Clay was appointed missionary for Washburn and Bayfield. He moved from Washburn in May of 1894 to Bayfield, where he officiated until June of 1895.

MANY DONATIONS RECEIVED IN THE NINETIES

IMPROVEMENTS on the church were gradually being made and in 1893 a new altar section was built. New choir seats and

a lectern were added. The church was the recipient of many gifts during the next four years, among which were the following:

Red altar cloth, from Miss S. Kester
Eucharistic lights, from Bishop Grafton
Brass altar rail, presented by Colonel Wing, Bayfield
Brass altar desk, presented by the Sunday School members
Altar book, from Mr. and Mrs. C. Clay
White altar cloth, presented by Mr. G. E. Ames
White altar vestments, presented by the Guild of Disciples, Boston
Hymn Board, from the children of the Mission
Litany vestments, from Mrs. C. H. Gardner of Trinity Cathedral, Omaha, Nebraska.

A font was donated by Mrs. John McCloud, in memory of her son who was drowned in August of 1890. Previously, Mrs. McCloud's silver butter dish had been used as the baptismal bowl.

Other gifts to the church were the windows to the left and right of the altar and directly above it. The window to the left bears the inscription: "To the Glory of God and sacred to the beloved memory of Theodore Carrington. Erected Easter, 1896." The colors in the window are blue and gold.

The window to the right of the altar matches this, except for the center which is a sheaf of wheat instead of a group of grapes, circled in crimson. The inscription is: "To the Glory of God and in loving memory of John and Nancy Banfill. Erected Easter, 1896."

Directly above the altar are three windows with an inscription which runs across them all: "In thankful memory of deliverance from a great peril on the lake. Summer 1892." They were erected by Mr. Dean Gardner after the safe return of his son from peril on Lake Superior.

A prayer desk was subsequently donated by Mrs. Gardner. The inscription on it is: "To the Glory of God. Given by his wife in loving memory of Charles Henry Gardner, Priest. Died Aug. 8, 1896."

A cross used on the altar bears the in-

scription: "In memory of our beloved daughter Susie B. Knight."

OTHER PRIESTS WHO SERVED THE CHURCH

THE Reverend Andrew Harper, Jr., became priest in charge of the church on June 5, 1896. The Reverend Mr. Herbert Webster was the next resident priest. Priests who subsequently officiated between the years 1901 and 1949 were: The Reverend Carlton M. Hitchcock, the Rev. G. L. Smith, the Rev. Herbert B. Pulsifer, the Rev. Albion H. Ross, the Rev. Herman Keyser, the Rev. Alfred N. Summerville, the Rev. E. A. Wilson, the Rev. J. F. Hodson, the Rev. Harry S. Ruth, the Rev. E. R. Jones, the Rev. John Rowell, the Rev. E. F. Crary and the Rev. M. G. Argeaux.

In recent years, many communicants moved to other cities and it became impossible to support a clergyman in Bayfield at all times. The resident priest of Ashland took over the duties of conducting services in Bayfield whenever they could be arranged. Due to the lack of funds with which to make adequate repairs, the Rev. M. G. Argeaux has conducted winter services in Bayfield since 1942 in the homes of members, though during the summer, worship has taken place regularly in the old church.

The Right Reverend William E. Horstick, D.D., Bishop of Eau Claire Diocese, was consecrated the second bishop of Eau Claire on June 29, 1944.

M. G. Argeaux, D.D., is the present priest in charge of St. Andrews Episcopal Church, Ashland, Wisconsin, serving various missions, Christ Church Mission, Bayfield, included.

In 1948, Mr. A. H. Wilkinson, formerly of Bayfield, donated funds in memory of his wife, Lillian T. Wilkinson, for a new concrete foundation and entrance steps. The foundation replaced the old cedar posts which served for so many years, but through

deterioration, caused the church to become unsafe.

A WORTHY INFLUENCE ON BAYFIELD LIFE

CHRIST Church history dates back to the beginning of Bayfield and is worthy of restoration.

During the early years of Bayfield's history, Christ Episcopal Church was one of the chief influences for good in the community. Its active congregation numbered among its members many of the leaders of the town — men and women who, because of their belief and trust in God and by virtue of the training and inspiration of the Church, helped to make Bayfield a finer, nobler place in which to live, then and in succeeding years.

It would be impossible to measure the benefits and blessings that have accrued to Bayfield through the years as a result of the influence and constant benediction of little old Christ Church. Nor can we pretend to estimate the amount of future good which may yet come from that now small parish. Still its roots are deep in the soil of Bayfield, and its life is a part of the continuing tradition of the community.

This we may say with certainty: Christ Church, as agent of God's Kingdom, can still contribute richly to the lives of men, women and children in this vicinity and thereby continue to serve God and man. It is fitting that restoration be continued and the church preserved for future use and spiritual benefits to the community and its visitors.

STANLEY KAYE'S OBJECTIVE

Concerning his drawing of Christ church, Artist Stanley Kaye writes:

"It is to be desired that you find an inviting warmth in the sketch—that such structure imparted to the efforts of those earlier sentinels of human dignity."

The Milwaukee Times



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